



**Macomb
Community College**

Education • Enrichment • Economic Development

Institutional Research

**39th Macomb Opinion Survey
Fall 2005
Full Sample (N=432)**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

The main objectives of the 39th Macomb Opinion Survey (MOS) were to:

- Identify the major problems facing Macomb County;
- Assess the level of satisfaction regarding various issues affecting the quality of life and the projected outlook of quality of life in the future; and
- Assess the public perception about the current and future economic outlook.

Findings

Major problem facing Macomb County

- The major problem facing Macomb County is the economy and unemployment. It was reported as the #1 problem by 32.2% of respondents. This is the first time the problem has been ranked first in ten years.
- Roads/traffic problems, crime/violence and higher taxes are ranked 2nd, 3rd and 4th place as reported by 13.8%, 10.3% and 9.3% of respondents respectively.
- Nearly two thirds of the residents (64.5%) reported that the major problem they identified also exists in their neighborhoods and is impacting their communities.

Quality of life issues and public services satisfaction

- The quality of life issues with the **highest satisfaction** are fire protection, followed by access to 2-year college programs, police protection, public schools, health care services, and access to 4-year college programs.
- Quality of life issues with the **lowest satisfaction** are job opportunities, public transportation, property tax rates, job training, and road maintenance.
- A combined 92.4 % of respondents report that the quality of life in their communities is good or excellent.
- The majority of the respondents (55%) report that a year from now the quality of life will stay the same, 28.6% believe it will get worse, and 16.5% of residents expect the quality of life to improve.

Perception of the current and future economic outlook

- Nearly half (48.5%) of respondents reported that someone in their immediate family or a friend had lost his/her job in the last 12 months.
- Respondents were split in their perception of the current state of Macomb County's economy. A combined 43.7 % of residents feel that the economy is good or excellent and conversely 56.3% feel it is poor or not doing well. Residents are more positive about business conditions in their communities. A combined 68.2% of residents feel that the conditions are good or excellent and 31.8% think the conditions are poor or not doing well. Similarly, a combined 69.8% reported that their financial situation is either good or excellent and 30.2% that the situation is poor or not so good.
- The predictions of respondents about the county's economy, business conditions and personal finances a year from now indicate that on average the residents believe that things will stay the same.
- The level of concern residents have about their children's future such as being able to buy a home and have a good paying job is mixed, 22.6% reported being very worried, 36.5% somewhat worried, 16.9% reported being a little worried and 24% of respondents felt secure about the future of their children.

Conclusions

- A weaker local economy and higher unemployment are the major concerns of Macomb County residents. This is not surprising given the economic downturn the county is experiencing as a result of manufacturing job losses and related automotive industry layoffs.
- These concerns also resonate among residents' views about the quality of life issues and public services. Fewer job opportunities and lack of job training are two of the issues among several about which Macomb County residents expressed dissatisfaction. These, however, should not mask the fact that residents remain very satisfied with fire and police protection services, the public schools, and access to 2-year college programs.
- Although the perception of the overall quality of life among Macomb county residents is fairly good, the future outlook is less optimistic given the current economic conditions. The findings point to the "half-full vs. half-empty" glass analogy, which on the whole suggests that there is less optimism about the economic future of Macomb County among residents.

SECTION A: MAJOR PROBLEM FACING MACOMB COUNTY

Table A1: Number one problem

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Economy/unemployment	129	32.3	32.3
Roads/traffic	55	13.8	46.0
Crime/violence	41	10.3	56.3
High taxes/assessments	39	9.8	66.0
Government/politics	18	4.5	70.5
Others	18	4.5	75.0
Education/schools	14	3.5	78.5
Urban Sprawl	11	2.8	81.3
No problem	11	2.8	84.0
Family/social issues	10	2.5	86.5
Alcohol/drug abuse	9	2.3	88.8
Water problems	8	2.0	90.8
Cost of living	7	1.8	92.5
Health care	6	1.5	94.0
Municipal services	5	1.3	95.3
Public safety	4	1.0	96.3
Transportation	4	1.0	97.3
Jail overcrowding	4	1.0	98.3
Oil price	3	.8	99.0
Senior concerns	2	.5	99.5
National security	2	.5	100.0
Total	400	100.0	

Table A2: Categories of "Other problems (N=18)

Cell phone drivers	.
City overcrowding	.
Cutting down too many trees	.
Farmers not getting pay enough money	.
House sewage problem	.
Lack of belief in God	.
Lack of morals	.
Low income housing	.
Not enough honesty	.
Not enough low income housing	.
Not enough ORV training	.
Population growth	.
Rats	.
Rip off from saving accounts	.
Smoking	.
Teenagers	.
Telemarketers	.
Too many grocery stores	.

Table A3: Is the problem in your neighborhood?

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	238	64.5	64.5
No	131	35.5	100.0
Total	369	100.0	

SECTION B: QUALITY OF LIFE & PUBLIC SERVICES

Table B1: Ratings of the Quality of life issues and related public services

Quality of Life Issue	Not at all Satisfied (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Very Satisfied (5)	N	Mean	95% Confidence Interval	
								Lower	Upper
Fire protection	5 (1.2%)	8 (2%)	58 (14.2%)	156 (38.2%)	181 (44.4%)	408	4.23	4.14	4.31
Access to 2-year college programs	12 (3.7%)	18 (5.6%)	60 (18.7%)	109 (34%)	122 (38%)	321	3.97	3.85	4.09
Police protection	12 (2.9%)	24 (5.7%)	94 (22.5%)	149 (35.6%)	139 (33.3%)	418	3.91	3.81	4.00
Public schools	14 (4.1%)	25 (7.3%)	82 (24%)	119 (34.8%)	102 (29.8%)	342	3.79	3.68	3.90
Air and water quality	22 (5.2%)	36 (8.4%)	95 (22.2%)	142 (33.3%)	132 (30.9%)	427	3.76	3.66	3.87
Health care services	24 (6%)	32 (8%)	81 (20.3%)	152 (38.1%)	110 (27.6%)	399	3.73	3.62	3.84
Access to 4-year college programs	20 (6.4%)	32 (10.2%)	85 (27.2%)	105 (33.5%)	71 (22.7%)	313	3.56	3.43	3.69
Recreational programs	24 (6.2%)	51 (13.1%)	94 (24.1%)	136 (34.9%)	85 (21.8%)	390	3.53	3.42	3.65
Child care services	14 (6.3%)	21 (9.5%)	92 (41.6%)	62 (28.1%)	32 (14.5%)	221	3.35	3.21	3.49
Your local community government	34 (8.6%)	35 (8.8%)	143 (36.1%)	125 (31.6%)	59 (14.9%)	396	3.35	3.24	3.46
Macomb County government	22 (5.7%)	43 (11.1%)	152 (39.1%)	132 (33.9%)	40 (10.3%)	389	3.32	3.22	3.42
Cultural programs	23 (6.5%)	56 (15.8%)	129 (36.3%)	97 (27.3%)	50 (14.1%)	355	3.27	3.15	3.38
Affordable housing	38 (9.9%)	46 (12%)	156 (40.6%)	98 (25.5%)	46 (12%)	384	3.18	3.07	3.29
Land use and urban development	57 (15.5%)	56 (15.2%)	131 (35.6%)	75 (20.4%)	49 (13.3%)	368	3.01	2.88	3.13
Road adequacy	71 (16.8%)	77 (18.2%)	131 (31%)	87 (20.6%)	57 (13.5%)	423	2.96	2.84	3.08
Road maintenance	67 (15.9%)	97 (23%)	127 (30%)	88 (20.9%)	43 (10.2%)	422	2.86	2.75	2.98
Job training	39 (13.6%)	56 (19.6%)	125 (43.7%)	49 (17.1%)	17 (5.9%)	286	2.82	2.70	2.94
Property tax rates	82 (20.9%)	58 (14.8%)	157 (40%)	65 (16.6%)	30 (7.7%)	392	2.75	2.64	2.87
Public transportation	96 (33.1%)	34 (11.7%)	67 (23.1%)	35 (12.1%)	58 (20%)	290	2.74	2.57	2.92
Job opportunities	69 (19.6%)	93 (26.4%)	128 (36.4%)	48 (13.6%)	14 (4%)	352	2.56	2.45	2.67

Table B2: Frequency counts and mean rating of overall quality of life

Poor (1)	Not so good (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)	N	Mean	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower	Upper
7 (1.7%)	25 (6.0%)	305 (70.6%)	83 (19.8%)	420	3.10	3.05	3.16

Table B3: Mean rating of projected change in the quality of life

Will get worse (1)	Will stay the same (2)	Will get Better (3)	N	Mean	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
118 (28.6%)	226 (54.9%)	68 (16.5%)	412	1.88	1.81	1.94

SECTION C: PERCEPTIONS ON CURRENT AND FUTURE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK OF MACOMB COUNTY

Table C1: Someone in family or friend lost job in last 12 months

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	204	48.5	48.5
No	217	51.5	100.0
Total	421	100.0	

Table C2: Perceptions on the current state of the economy, business conditions and personal finances

Perceptions of current state of:	Poor (1)	Not so good (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)	N	Mean
Macomb County's economy	42 (10.4%)	185 (45.9%)	171 (42.4%)	5 (1.2%)	403	2.34
Business conditions in their community	27 (6.6%)	103 (25.2%)	256 (62.6%)	23 (5.6%)	409	2.67
Personal or family finances	30 (7.3%)	95 (23.0%)	253 (61.3%)	35 (8.5%)	413	2.71

Table C3: Future projections related to the economy, business conditions and personal finances

Projections of the future state of ____ one year from now	Will get Worse (1)	Will stay the same (2)	Will get better (3)	N	Mean
Macomb County's economy	133 (33.2%)	165 (41.1%)	103 (25.7%)	401	1.93
Business conditions in their community	100 (24.1%)	218 (52.5%)	97 (23.4%)	415	1.99
Personal or family finances	71 (17.1%)	224 (54.0%)	120 (28.9%)	415	2.12

Table C4: Concerns about children's future success

Current feeling about your children being able to own home or have a good paying job	Very worried (1)	Somewhat worried (2)	Little worried (3)	Not worried at all (4)	N	Mean
Response	75 (22.6%)	121 (36.4%)	56 (16.9%)	80 (24.1%)	332	2.42

SECTION D: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**Table D1: Age Categories**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
18-24 years	15	3.8	3.8
25-34 years	28	7.1	10.9
35-44 years	68	17.2	28.0
45-54 years	80	20.2	48.2
55-64 years	83	21.0	69.2
65 years and older	122	30.8	100.0
Total	396	100.0	

Table D2: Income Categories

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than \$25,000	67	20.7	20.7
Between \$25,000 and \$34,999	60	18.6	39.3
Between \$35,000 and \$49,999	50	15.5	54.8
Between \$50,000 and \$74,999	43	13.3	68.1
Between \$75,000 and \$99,999	32	9.9	78.0
\$100,000 or more	71	22.0	100.0
Total	323	100.0	

Table D3: Educational Level

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than high school grad	37	9.4	9.4
High school diploma/GED	112	28.4	37.7
Some college, no degree	108	27.3	65.1
Certificate/associate degree	43	10.9	75.9
Bachelor's degree	58	14.7	90.6
Graduate/professional degree	37	9.4	100.0
Total	395	100.0	

Table D4: Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	175	41.6	41.6
Female	246	58.4	100.0
Total	421	100.0	

Table D5: Regions of Macomb County (zip code based)

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Mt. Clemens	170	44.2	44.2
Sterling Heights	61	15.8	60.0
Northwest	50	13.0	73.0
Warren/Centerline	44	11.4	84.4
Southeast	43	11.2	95.6
Northeast	17	4.4	100.0
Total	385	100.0	